Research Proposal of the Thesis Entitled

Visual Storytelling as a Pedagogic device: Developing a Methodology for the Design Classroom

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By

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Visual Storytelling as a Pedagogic device: Developing a Methodology for the Design Classroom

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Introduction:

The study explores the importance of visual storytelling in a design classroom. A classroom in a design fraternity is a place where the exchange of ideas is a daily process. Stories are a great way to communicate imagination and humans naturally relate faster to them. A design idea is a result of a strategic and conscious process in the direction of finding a solution. Every design project leads to countless ideas being discussed and brought forth as part of brainstorming exercises. Students use various methods that are very tedious and elaborate including a lot of brainstorming. As per IDEO - the global design company, a design process includes the following vital steps: observation, ideation, prototyping, feedback, iteration, and feedback. Subconsciously, design students extensively use narratives to convey their design ideas while working on different projects in the classroom. The need to use narratives arises from translating ideas into visual forms to make communication more accessible and tangible. Visual narratives help to recognize intangible design problems. A design classroom is a great place to use this method in innumerable forms for creative results. Design thinking, design process, and design education are a combination where students generate ideas for design solving daily. This generates a need to implement design pedagogy wherein storytelling plays an important role.

Aims and Objectives:

- To determine the benefits of using visual narratives as a means to communicate ideas and sequencing processes
- To develop pedagogical tools that use visual narratives effectively in various stages of the design process
- To identify effective methods of using visual narratives in the design process at various stages
- To understand and analyse the existing pedagogy of using narratives in the design classroom.
- To identify the need for alternative pedagogy for better engagement and communication in the design classroom

Rationale:

- What different ways are used by students to communicate ideas in a design classroom?
- What are the different pedagogical tools used by faculties in a design classroom that use visual narratives as part of the design process?
- What are the different pedagogical tools used by faculties in a design classroom that use visual narratives as part of the design process?
- Which different types of methods can be introduced to students for generating visual narratives in the design process?
- What are the existing pedagogies being explored in the design classroom?
- Which different pedagogical tools can be introduced for better engagement and communication in the design classroom?

Significance of the proposed study:

The study establishes an opportunity to explore and develop visual narratives as a pedagogy in a classroom. The study looks into the need and importance of implementing visual narratives at different stages including framing the problem, generating ideas, prototyping solutions, and testing the selected results.

Limitations:

- Only design students and faculties teaching in the design field shall be considered
- The study is limited to visual narratives as part of design education, where exercises conducted within the classroom shall be considered.
- Secondary data is available to the extent of pedagogical devices designed for schools and not much in design colleges
- No existing research to bridge the gap between pedagogy design narratives consciously not applied in a design classroom

Literature Review:

- Design Education: Imparting knowledge skills is an important aspect of design education. Design education is a combination of practicing theory along with innovative ideas. Teaching and learning design is an exploration of creative explorations and judgments segregated into a variety of design domains.

- Design Thinking: The two main types of human thinking are divergent thinking and convergent thinking. Divergent thinking = can be termed as one being more problem-solving oriented while convergent thinking is more creative. Creative thinking is an essential aspect of design thinking which involves design strategies and innovative techniques to arrive at creative solutions. Design thinking involves developing and practicing along with giving attention to details.

- Design Process: Teaching design involves using drawing as a medium of communication. The process of designing continues till the problems perceived by the designer are resolved. The process is a combination of strategic steps which include ideating, visualizing, researching, implementing, and applying.

- Pedagogy: Narration is a pedagogic tool effective in enhancing communication and socialization in almost any teaching field. Different types of narrations as storytelling are used as a teaching method to produce the desired effect for creative solutions. Narration as a pedagogy liberates creativity and encourages experimentation for better problem-solving.

- Storytelling: There are majorly three types of storytelling namely, oral, written, and visual. The design needs visual connection combined with written and oral expressions in the process. Creative inputs are a result of a co-creative process and 'learning by making is an essential part of practicing design. Representation and expression play an important role where storytelling becomes an essential communication tool.

- Attributes of Storytelling for Different Learners: Any story is a Plot, character, dialogue, theme, and layout. Generating narratives with available information and add-on intentions can lead to creative storytelling. Storytelling comes with an interconnected sequence of information using the plot and theme. The characters might change and the layout differs depending on the kind of story and its need.

- Types of Learners: In general, when it comes to learning, the types of learners can be classified as follows:
    1) Hands-on Learning: 'Learning by Doing' is the main idea behind this type of learning method where making and experimenting becomes the most important aspect of understanding.
    2) Visual learners: those who grasp and remember through graphics, images, and media as a source of

information. They also choose to communicate their understanding in similar ways.

3) Auditory learners: To understand, auditory learners need to be able to listen to what is being said. They may struggle to grasp instructions that have been drawn out, but if the text is organised logically, it may be simpler to follow.
4) Readers and Writers: Learning involves reading text or writing it to grasp it better. The type of reading and writing may vary from learner to learner, but the basic way of learning stays common.
5) Kinaesthetic Learners: When learners adapt to understanding through movement and physical activities which involve body movement, hand signs, or tactile learning, it can be termed a kinaesthetic form of learning.
6) Co-creative Learners: Learning through teamwork, and group work where the exchange of ideas and a systematic distribution of work takes place.

- Storytelling as a pedagogic device: Both benefits as well as challenges – are based on integrating concepts. Stories create classroom connections through the process of interactions. This process of giving knowledge and taking experiences using connecting with students leads to easy understanding and better learning. Interpretation and understanding of difficult subjects become smoother by employing storytelling. Quite many few schools have already been using this method as a pedagogy in subjects like maths, languages, science, and social studies. Students show spontaneity in responsive learning as a result of connecting with stories. Storytelling generates a conceptual approach to curriculum. It generates a need for exploiting the potential possibilities of using visual storytelling in a design classroom.

Research Gap and Problem Identification

- Design students learn by doing, which becomes a challenging task to express visually.
- A lot of research studies focus on storytelling as a pedagogic tool in schools amongst children, but not
  design students specifically.
- Visual storytelling specifically has not been much used as a pedagogic tool in the design education field
- Storytelling and its various types have been very much exploited in the design field as a mode of
- representation rather than a conscious design process
- Designing is more of an individual process, thus connecting with stories and real-life experiences makes it important to develop narrations along the path of the design process.

- Storytelling has long been used as a teaching tool by teachers, parents, and guides, but visual storytelling can be used in the design process to enhance imagination and intentions.

Need for More Research

- To make design activities interactive and experiential
- To stay connected with design processes and help explain concepts better
- To ignite imagination by promoting ‘learning by doing
- To connect with real-life scenarios by mixing imagination with experiences
- Previous researches indicate that storytelling enhances creativity in students and has been part of a human’s life since birth.
- Smooth transmission of communicating ideas concerning solving design.
- Visual perception along with narration can help make the process to explain design concepts simpler.

Methodology, Tools, and Techniques:

- Conduct workshops and introduce small courses within the modules and check outcomes
- Analysis of student works concerning the types of visual narratives used, representation techniques applied
- Conduct peer feedback and observe faculties in the design classroom while the exercises are being conducted by them.
- Conduct a survey amongst students to understand how useful the exercises have been
- Conduct a survey amongst faculties to understand how much engaging the exercises have been and their communication.

The following table shall explain the methodologies and tools adapted for the respective objectives as listed phase-wise:

Phase	**Objectives**	**Methodology**	**Tools**
1	To determine the benefits of using visual narratives as a means to communicate ideas and sequencing processes	Conduct workshops and introduce small courses within the modules and check outcomes	Design exercises, lesson plans

2	To develop pedagogical tools that use visual narratives effectively in various stages of the design process	Analysis of student works concerning the types of visual narratives used, representation techniques applied	Diagrams, sketches, and infographics
3	To identify effective methods of using visual narratives in the design process at various stages	Conduct peer feedback and observe faculties	Interviews, feedback forms
4	To understand and analyse the existing pedagogy of using narratives in the design of classroom	Conduct a survey among students to understand how useful the exercises have been and their understanding	Questionnaire
5	To identify the need for alternative pedagogy for better engagement and communication in the design classroom	Conduct a survey among faculties to understand how much engaging the exercises have been and their communication	Interviews, observation forms

Expected Conclusion and its possible value:

- Research will help educators in the long run to generate narratives in the design process
- It will make understanding of concepts simpler, more engaging, fun, and interactive.

Plan of research:

Phase	**Activities**	**Timeline**	**Month/Year**
1	General research + literature review (secondary data collection)	6 months – general research on the topic 6 months – literature review	Aug – Dec 2021 Jan – Aug 2022
2	TAC (Thesis Advisory Committee) Meetings	Once a year (At least)	Aug 2022
3	Chapterization: Classification of the topics and subjects in research	Conduct peer feedback and observe faculties	Interviews, feedback forms

4a	Primary Data Collection: Conducting classroom experiments/activities Conducting surveys	6 months to 1 year	Jan 2023– Jan 2024
4b	Paper presentation: ICord'23		9th to 11th Jan'23
4c	Full paper – Journal Submission		Dec'22 – Feb'23
5a	Analysis of work Classifying the primary data	6 months	Jan 2024 – Aug 2024
5b	Full paper – Journal Submission		May23-Dec'23
6	Hypothesis and Results	6 months to 1 year	Jan 2024 – Aug 2024
7	Documentation	6 months	Aug 2024 – Dec 2024

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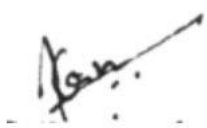

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